

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) ~~up~~ In a computer-aided design environment, a method for ensuring consistency of design rule application among a plurality of CAD tool programs, each design rule defining a design characteristic, the method comprising:
 - (a) creating a global design rule definition file ~~in~~ as a plain text file in SKILL format, the global design rule definition file including at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
 - (b) providing a technology file containing a reference to the global variable;
 - (c) initializing one of the CAD tool programs which utilizes the global variable with the technology file reference to the global variable; and
 - (d) determining whether any modifications have occurred to the design rule and ~~redefining a text value of~~ the global variable in the global design rule definition file in accordance with modifications to the design rule and conforming the CAD tool program to modifications in the design rule.
2. -3. (Cancelled)
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the CAD tool program and the global design rule definition file are written in the same language.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the CAD tool program and the global design rule definition file are not written in the same language.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein (c) further comprises:
 - (c.1) translating the global design rule definition file ~~variable~~ into the language of the CAD tool program.
7. (Cancelled) The method of claim 1 wherein (a) further comprises:
 - (a.1) creating a global design rule definition file comprising a plurality of global variables, each global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto.
8. (Currently amended) In a computer-aided design system having at least one memory and adhering to a plurality of design rules, each design rule defining a design characteristic, a system for ensuring consistency of design rule application among a plurality of CAD tool programs, the system having a memory and comprising:
 - A. a global design rule definition file ~~in~~ as a plain text file in SKILL format, the global design rule definition file stored in the memory and including at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
 - B. a technology file stored in the memory and containing a reference to the global variable;
 - C. at least one CAD tool program stored in the memory and which utilizes the global variable; and
 - D. means for ensuring that the CAD tool program utilizes the current design rule changes.
9. (Original) The system of claim 8 wherein the means for ensuring comprises:
means for initializing the CAD tool program which utilizes the global variable with the technology file reference to the global variable.
10. (Previously presented) The system of claim 8 wherein the CAD tool program and the global design rule definition file are written in the same language.

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11. (Original) The system of claim 8 wherein the CAD tool program and the global design rule definition file are not written in the same language.
12. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11 wherein the system further comprises program code configured to translate the global design rule definition file variable into the language of the CAD tool program.
13. (Cancelled) The system of claim 8 wherein the global design rule definition file comprises a plurality of global variables, each global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto.
14. (Currently amended) A computer program product for use with a computer system, the computer system capable of executing computer-aided design programs, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having program code embodied in the medium, the program code comprising:
 - (a) program code for defining a global design rule definition file in as a plain text file in SKILL format, the global design rule definition file having at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
 - (b) program code defining a technology file containing a reference to the global variable;
 - (c) program code for initializing one of the CAD tool programs which utilizes the global variable with the technology file reference to the global variable; and
 - (d) program code for redefining ~~a text value of~~ the global variable in the CAD tool program in accordance with modifications to the design rule characteristic assigned to the global variable in the global design rule definition file.
15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) In a computer-aided design system having a memory, a method for ensuring consistency of design rule application among a plurality of CAD tool programs, each design rule defining a design characteristic, the method comprising:
- (a) creating a global design rule definition file ~~in~~ as a plain text file in SKILL format in the memory, the global design rule definition file including at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
 - (b) providing at least one program statements within one of the CAD tool programs which references a global variable within the global design rule definition file; and
 - (c) ~~redefining a text value of~~ the global variable in the global design rule definition file in accordance with modifications to the design rule characteristic and conforming the CAD tool program to modifications in the design rule characteristic.
17. (Cancelled)
18. (Cancelled) A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave:
- A. program code for performing a computer-aided design function with a value of a global variable file in text format, representing a design rule characteristic;
 - B. program code for referencing the value of the global variable in a technology file; and
 - C. program code for utilizing a text value of the global variable received from the technology file to perform the computer-aided design function.
19. (Cancelled) The system of claim 16 wherein the global design rule definition file comprises a plurality of global variables file in text format, each global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto.

20. (Cancelled) The system of claim 14 wherein the global design rule definition file comprises a plurality of global variables file in text format, each global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto.